

THE DEAD MUSICIAN



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THE DEAD MUSICIAN
AND OTHER POEMS

THE
DEAD MUSICIAN
AND OTHER POEMS

By
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LAURENCE J. GOMME
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To
MY MOTHER

2200423

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THE DEAD MUSICIAN

THE DEAD MUSICIAN

In memory of Brother Basil, organist for half a
century at Notre Dame.

HE was the player and the played upon,
He was the actor and the acted on,
Artist, and yet himself a substance wrought;
God played on him as he upon the keys,
Moving his soul to mightiest melodies
Of lowly serving, hid austerities,
And holy thought that our high dream out-
tops,—

He was an organ where God kept the stops.
Naught, naught

Of all he gave us came so wondrous clear
As that he sounded to the Master's ear.

Wedded he was to the immortal Three,
Poverty, Obedience and Chastity,
And in a fourth he found them all expressed,
For him all gathered were in Music's breast,
And in God's house
He took her for his spouse,—

THE DEAD MUSICIAN

High union that the world's eye never scans
Nor world's way knows.
Not any penny of applauding hands
He caught, nor would have caught,
Not any thought
Save to obey
Obedience that bade him play,
And for his bride
To have none else beside,
That both might keep unflecked their virgin
snows.

Yet by our God's great law
Such marriage issue saw,
As they who cast away may keep,
Who sow not reap.
In Chastity entombed
His manhood bloomed,
And children not of earth
Had spotless birth.
With might immortal was he strong
That he begot
Of what was not,
Within the barren womb of silence, song.
Yea, many sons he had
To make his sole heart glad —

THE DEAD MUSICIAN

Romping the boundless meadows of the air,
Skipping the cloudy hills, and climbing bold
The heavens' nightly stairs of starry gold,

Nay winning heaven's door

To mingle evermore

With deathless troops of angel harmony.

He filled the house of God

With servants at his nod,

A music-host of moving pageantry,

Lo, this a priest, and that an acolyte:

Ah, such we name aright

Creative art,

To body forth love slumbering in the
heart . . .

Fools, they who pity him,

Imagine dim

Days that the world's glare brightens not.

Until the seraphim

Shake from their flashing hair

Lightnings, and weave serpents there,

His days we reckon fair. . . .

Yet more he had than this;

Lord of the liberative kiss,

To own, and yet refrain,

To hold his hand in rein.

THE DEAD MUSICIAN

High continence of his high power
That turns from virtue's very flower,
In loss of that elected pain
A greater prize to gain.
As one who long had put wine by
Would now himself deny
Water, and thirsting die.
So, sometimes he was idle at the keys,
Pale fingers on the aged ivories;
Then, like a prisoned bird,
Music was seen, not heard,
Then were his quivering hands most strong
With blood of the repressèd song,—
A fruitful barrenness. Oh, where,
Out of angelic air,
This side the heavens' spheres
Such sight to start and hinder tears.
Who knows, perhaps while silence throbbed
He heard the De Profundis sobbed
By his own organ at his bier to-day,—
It is the saints' anticipative way,
He knew both hand and ear were clay.
That was one thought
Never is music wrought,
For silence only could that truth convey.

THE DEAD MUSICIAN

Widowed of him, his organ now is still,
His music-children fled, their echoing feet yet
fill

The blue, far reaches of the vaulted nave,
The heart that sired them, pulseless in the
grave.

Only the song he made is hushed, his soul,
Responsive to God's touch, in His control
Elsewhere shall tune the termless ecstasy

Of one who all his life kept here

An alien ear,

Homesick for harpings of eternity.

A HIVE OF SONG

IMMORTALITY

I SHALL go down as the sun goes
Over the rim of the world —
Will there be quiet around me,
As of sunset banners furled?

I shall take flight as a bird wings
Into the infinite blue —
What if my song come ringing
Down through the stars and the dew?

I shall mount, strong as the promise
Forged in love's white, first fire —
A soul through the rustling darkness
On pinions of desire.

THE SIGN

Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

— SWINBURNE.

NOT leaf by leaf the altered woodlands lose
The summer's glory, lingering overlong,
But bird by bird whose flight the wood-way
 strews
With silence, fallen foliage of song.

And spring begins not thus, O singing mouth,
Blossom by blossom, the trees yet being
 dumb,—
But rather say, when wings flash from the
 south
Carol by carol the spring is come.

THE EARTH-HOUR

THE earth was made in twilight, and the
hour

Of blending dusk and dew is still her own,
Soft as it comes with promise and with power
Of folded heavens, lately sunset-blown.

Then we who know the bitter breath of earth,
Who hold her every rapture for a pain,
Yet leave the travail of celestial birth
To wipe our tears upon the dusk again.

But vain; the spirit takes, in sovereign mood,
A sure revenge, as in some tree apart
A whippoorwill sets trembling all the wood,—
The silence mends more quickly than the
heart.

THE POET'S BREAD

MORN offers him her flaskèd light
That he may slake his thirst of soul,
And for his hungry heart will Night
Her wonder-cloth of stars outroll.

However fortune goes or comes
He has his daily certain bread,
Taking the heaven's starry crumbs,
And with a crust of sunset fed.

FORGIVENESS

Now God be thanked that roads are long and
wide,
And four far havens in the scattered sky:
It would be hard to meet and pass you by.

And God be praised there is an end of pride,
And pity only has a word to say,
While memory grows dim as time grows
gray.

For, God His word, I gave my best to you,
All that I had, the finer and the sweet,
To make — a path for your unquiet feet.

Their track is on the life they trampled
through;
Such evil steps to leave such hallowing.
Now God be with them in their wandering.

A MARCH EVENING

FAIL from the field the shouts of play,
While twilight falls like snow,
And overheard on their westering way
The silent swallows go.

But songs are brooding in the hush,
And green sleeps in the sod,—
Tomorrow you shall hear the rush
Of life, come fresh from God.

O TWILIGHT HOUR!

O TWILIGHT hour, you come and take my
heart,
With all your folded wings and colors
flown
From all your folded flowers, silver
grown —
O twilight hour, you come and take my heart.

Your feet have trod what alien, far ways,
On all the battlefields of time you came,
In many a bower you fell upon love's flame,
Your feet have trod what wonderful sad ways.

Egypt has met you, and the crest of Rome
Has bowed you homage with a vassal smile,
And shadowy kingdoms of the dreaming
Nile;
Egypt has kissed you, Greece and faded Rome.

O TWILIGHT HOUR!

What prayers have fallen on your silver ear,
Franconian fields and Frison fiords among;
Bells have bespoke you, weeping queens
have sung:

The vespers of the world is in your ear.

Contented eyes have closed in your embrace,
Your seamless peace has covered wild
alarms;

Nurse of deep sleep, the gray zone of your
arms

Shall fold the waiting worlds in last em-
brace.

O twilight hour, you come and take my heart
And shake my soul with silent presagings;

I walk a lonely road, and no wind sings,
But come, O twilight hour, and take my
heart.

HARVEST-FIELDS

I WALKED today through a clover meadow,
mown

And sweet with dying bloom;
Treading under my feet a glory fit to grace
A king's way, or his tomb:
Acres of loveliness laid low, and dying
Of numberless lives, only the winds sighing.

And I thought, as who does not, of other
fields,
Flowered with unnumbered dead,
Wondering how those kings, the flowers of
grass,

Hold up a regal head,
Plan of closer cutting, redder harvest-making,
All the world sighing and its heart breaking.

VER

SANDALLED with violets, adown the breaking
way

She cometh, misty-eyed with hopes of May;
The changing splendor of the morning skies
Holds less of promise than her waiting eyes.

Across the black, ploughed fields her scarf of
rain

In floating folds enwraps the leaping grain,
While 'neath the velvet press of her thin feet,
Quickens to growth the yet unbladed wheat.

And as she dreameth, down the blue, far rills
Rise windy banks of unborn daffodils,—
Soft! is it growing grass or young birds' call
Lisping to her, the Mother of them all?

DROUGHT

THERE is no clover, and the frustrate bees,
Abroad upon the fields and down the lane,
Through all the forests of unflowered trees,
Monotonously murmuring, complain.
Murmuring monotonous, with wilding wings
That bear no blossomy burden nightly home,—
For all their laboring, but idle things,
But builders of a barren honeycomb.
Thus is it now the summer of my dreams
When falls no drop of rain or quickening
dew;
There are but sands where late were singing
streams,
And dusty bareness where the sweet thyme
grew:
The bees of all my thoughts are idle long,
There is no honey in the hive of song.

A FAREWELL

FORGET me, and remember me, O heart!
Forget me for the dear delight of days
We walked together down fair, fragrant
ways;
Remember me for that I now depart.

For that I give our one sure hour of bliss
As venturing a distant promised peace,
Give joy, for hope that joy may ne'er de-
crease,—
Reluctant heart, forget me not for this.

Nay, keep me in your fairest thoughts, my
fair;
Though all the sundering night be set to
pain,
It shall be day when we two meet again,
In some far valley of the timeless air.

THE EARTH MOTHER

HER lap is full of dead ; the tears
Wash down her graying cheek ;
Unto her riven heart the years
No comfort speak.

She holds them close, the flowers, the leaves,
Her yearly loved and dead ;
The universal Rachel grieves
Uncomforted.

ON A LITTLE BOY WHO DIED

You did not wait the spring
For burgeoning,
But ere the first flowers broke our sod
You blossomed at the feet of God.
I think there was that calling in your blood
Long months, and we not understood.
For I remember, now that you are dead,
How often in the days that sped
With shout and play about you, you
Withdrew
And for companion silence took
With a still look.
I noticed, standing by your side,
Your eyes were wonder-wide
And you seemed listening, though my ear
No sound could hear.
Once on your quietness I broke;
As one that woke
From strange dreams, awed but mild,
You caught my words and smiled;

ON A LITTLE BOY WHO DIED

And though with ready speech
You spoke, I knew I could not reach
By any art
The late far-listening heart.
You were wooed gently, little one,
Into the sun.
Death laid aside his awful state
Lest you should fear this new playmate,
And led you off to playgrounds green
Eye hath not seen.

DANTE TO BEATRICE ON EARTH

It is come home to me in secret hour —

O thou who sharest of the soul in me,
And givest of thyself into my power

The very essence of the heart of thee,—
We do in this commingling but rehearse,
With weary awkwardness of hands and
feet,

And with what marrings of immortal verse,
A life that love forsworn but makes complete.

This being so, O one of all my heart,
Witness what turn of iron consequence
Upon us comes: the woven hands must part,
And right and left must be an exit hence.
Love shall withdraw to be love evermore,—
Ring down the curtain, and the play give o'er.

For you and I are shadows of the Light,
We are but echoes of a perfect Song;
We hold dominion but as stars, in night,
Our blended voices, are they ever strong?

DANTE TO BEATRICE ON EARTH

What shall we say, whose struggle to pursue
A valorous rôle but bare escapes the sting
Of shamed surrender, would the words come
true

By Babylon's waters should we try to sing?
Hush, hush, O heart! The other side of sky
There is, believe it, love, a wondrous Hand
Forever wiping eyes forever dry;

There are no willows growing in that land,
And never shall the lips of love be mute,
God making of our hearts a faultless lute.

There have been lovers since the stars were
young;

We come upon a scene which time has
worn;

There have been who their souls away have
flung

And found them afterward, bruised all and
torn.

Matching their mortal with a deathless thing,
The brave and beauteous spirit they have
spurned,

Risen unchanged, shall they have heart to
sing,

Burning forever as on earth they burned?

DANTE TO BEATRICE ON EARTH

There in our heaven of unsundered bliss,
If any tears were left us to bestow,
Should not the thought of their triumphless
kiss
Cause the sweet currents of old grief to
flow?
Yet though tears burned the cheeks of their
despair,
The hand of God shall not be busy there.

DREAMS OF DONEGAL

INHERITANCE

IN Donegal, where old romance yet blows
O'er hill and hearth, the children in the blast
Of storm hear cries and clashing arms of
those
Whose dreams were deeds, in Eire's living
past.

And looking on the fields with clover spread
They never stop to pick the wind-stirred
bloom;
Those flowers might be the blood their fathers
shed
Now come to ruddy blossom on their tomb.

They look upon the lifted sea that flows
In mountains shoreward, breaks, and piles
again;
The winds, they say, thus heap a cairn for
those
Who have God's acre in the unmarked main.

INHERITANCE

I never saw the fields those children see,
The fog-scarfed mountains, nor the hilly deep,
But share their every dream and memory,—
Only the age-long hates I can not keep.

For there they lie, my fathers and their foes,
As in one grave they wait the trumpet call;
O'er some the foam, o'er some the clover
 blows,
The while they're sleeping long in Donegal.

LAMENT OF THE STOLEN BRIDE

Faery Child: Come, newly married bride.

W. B. YEATS, *The Land of
Heart's Desire.*

Go, thought of my heart, on the wings of the
wind

O'er the green on the meadows wide,
By the deep dark woods, with the sea behind,
Where the stars at anchor ride;
Steal into the heart of my old true love
As he turns from the shining plough,
And tell with the voice of the home-come
dove

Of the hunger that's on me now.

Ochone, for the land that is far away,
And Shawn of the stout warm arms;
Oh, better a world where the light is gray
And night is thick with alarms,
Than forever the music's maddening beat
In the moonlit faery land,

LAMENT OF THE STOLEN BRIDE

Than the ceaseless whir of the tripping feet
And the clasp of the bloodless hand.

E'en yet, when night is on fire with stars,
Or dropping the silver day,
I can hear the fall of the pasture bars
And the lilt of his whistled lay.
Then shaken from me are the dreamers'
charms,
My hand from the dancers' slips,
And the mother stands lonely with empty
arms,
And the widow with hungering lips.

THE SPELL OF DONEGAL

THE hills of Donegal are green,
And blue the bending sky,—
For sky and hills I have not seen
The holiest love have I.

There was my father born, and there
My mother's cheeks were red,
And blessed with sacred rite and prayer
Sleep all my kindred dead.

Across the fields the storm clouds sweep,
The screaming sea-birds call,
And waiting mothers watch and weep
On the coast of Donegal.

Hundreds of leagues to west and more
My own loved country lies,
And I must seek its eastward shore
With seaward straining eyes.

THE SPELL OF DONEGAL

Is it the legends of that isle
That hold my soul in thrall,
Its awful splendor, mile on mile,
Where thundering breakers fall?

Is it a spell of water-wraith
That thrills me through and through,
Or spirit of my fathers' faith
That springs in me anew?

The hills of Donegal are green
And blue the sky above,—
For sky and hills I have not seen
I keep the holiest love.

IN EXILE

A WIND comes over my heart, asthore,
With a shaking of silver wings,
From the green, far hills I shall see no more,
Where your morning linnet sings.

There comes to me now, like a flutter of
leaves,
The lilt of a tune and the tap of a shoe,
My heart at the memory throbs and grieves,
Oh, the voice and the looks of you!

Over the wind-vexed, sobbing seas
My dream-faint eyes now stray;
I am borne by a lilt on the evening breeze
To a vanished Patrick's Day.

A SHRINE OF DONEGAL

LOUGH DERG, Lough Derg, how chant the
waves along

Thy solemn shores, and in the flowing air
Drift murmurs of an unforgotten song
And of remembered prayer.

A land of sainted soil and hallowed sea,
Round no more sacred isle the broad tide
rolls,
Lough Derg, than where the waters compass
thee,
Crowned with thine aureoles.

For thee the print of Patrick's holy bones
Blesses; and echoes of the centuries' feet.
That moved along the penitential stones
In all thy winds are sweet.

A SHRINE OF DONEGAL

Here came my fathers in their life's high day
In barefoot sorrow, but God knows the
whole:

Not for themselves they fasted, but to lay
Up riches for my soul.

Great waters are between thy shores and me,
My feet upon thy strand may never stray,
But, O Lough Derg, the prayers they said on
thee
Fall on my need today.

KILLYBEGS

THE harbor lights of Killybegs
Look out to an open sea,
Where powder and wine in Spanish kegs
Came over in 'ninety-three.

Red Hugh he was the chieftain bold,
And high his word in Spain,
Where never a don his beads that told
But cursed the English main.

Grandee and Irish chief were one
To hate the apostate foe,
And all they did was justly done
To answer woe with woe.

For every Irish lass's eyes
Downcast for English shame,
Beneath the accusing Irish skies
Goes down an English name.

KILLYBEGS

For every bairn sadly born,
For old men wanton killed,
An English heart is fitly torn
And the wild blood fairly spilled.

A cross, I know, no sword was raised
There by the man of God,
But Patrick's dead eyes must have blazed
Under the outraged sod.

I am a man of peaceful palm,
The leaves of a book I turn:
Think you these old tales leave me calm?
I blush, I weep, I burn.

My mother was born in Killybegs,
Long after 'ninety-three;
And I bless the bursting Spanish kegs,
The harbor and the sea.

THE BIRD OF GOD

PREVISION

I CAN not tell what way the years will lead,
How hands may falter and how feet may
 bleed,
What deep contentment I shall have or need,
 I can not tell.

I do not know why the fleet early years
Should shake me with surmise of future fears;
Why golden suns set in a gloom of tears
 I do not know.

I must not ask of winter winds that come
Across the ground where men sleep cold and
 dumb,
If I shall rest there well,—of my last home
 I must not ask.

PREVISION

I shall not shrink, maybe I shall not dread,
When time has slowed my step and bowed my
 head,
To go away, to join the cloistered dead
 I shall not shrink.

I shall have hope, in spite of heavy shame,
Among God's pensioners to find my name,—
In Him who for the strayed and lost ones
 came
 I shall have hope.

RESTORATION

FROM these dead leaves the winds have
caught

And on the brown earth fling,
Yea, from their dust, new hosts shall rise
At the trumpet call of Spring.

Thus may the winds our ashes take,
But in that far dusk dim,
When God's eye hath burnt up the worlds,
This flesh shall stand with Him.

IN THE NIGHT

THE joyful heart is slow to sleep,
Repose it does not crave;
But weary are the eyes that weep
By sick-bed or by grave.

I lay awake the livelong night,
By joy too much made glad;
But with the coming of the light
I found my heart more sad.

The wings of joy are light and fleet,
They pass and leave no trace;
Deep prints are marked by sorrow's feet
Upon the spirit's face.

But God can fill the hollows up
With undeparting peace,
And they who drain their sorrow's cup
Know pain at last will cease.

IN THE NIGHT

The joyful heart, so slow to sleep,
May find its morning night,—
The heavy eyes of those who weep
May never lose the light.

THE WOOF OF LIFE

IN the moth-hour's silver gloom
The Weaver at His loom
The quiet pattern of my life would trace.
The grayness of the moth
He wove into the cloth,
And wrought thereon the red rose of your
face.

THE WINGS OF REST

THE marble door before Thy face
What is it but a little dust?
The chalice, golden, rubied vase,
Will drop away as all things must.

Thus fleeting are the things of sense,
Thyself alone eternal art;
Not more the universe immense
Thy home, than any human heart.

In this dim room the tides of time
Are changed and ever changing still;
Here while the hour-bells steady chime
Works out serene Thy timeless will.

I stand before Thee but a space,
If faith be seeing, sight is dim,—
To sinners mercy show, Thy face
For sunset eyes of seraphim.

THE WINGS OF REST

And they, my friends, who travel far,
They do not leave me, for with Thee
Distance is not, and every star
Whirls round Thy finger ceaselessly.

REQUITAL

If lips with olden memories
In heaven are sweet,
Mine shall have burning ecstasies
That kissed His feet.

If lips grown gray with pain,
In heaven are red,
Then mine shall bloom again,
Of life here bled.

If souls earth-emptied here,
In heaven are filled,
O heart, then let thy fear
Be stilled, be stilled.

ANGELS AT BETHLEHEM

Now at length they look on Him,
Unbeginning Awe,—
Cherubim and Seraphim,—
On the oaten straw.

Dost thou know, who dost not speak,
Woman all benign,
They have come from far to seek
Little Son of thine?

They have stored their gold and myrrh
Ages who shall tell,
Frankincense, since Lucifer
Quenched his name in hell.

Thrones and Dominations, Powers,
Trembling on that doom,
Waited all the timeless hours
On thy nine months' womb.

ANGELS AT BETHLEHEM

Michael, Raphael, Gabriel,
In the stable dim,
Come with ox and ass to dwell,
Serving Elohim.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

LAMBS and little children,
 Gather two by two;
Little Lamb and lowly Child
 Here is laid for you.
Come to Mary's tender Son,
Worship all, and one by one.

Lights are on His forehead,
 Little children, see;
Other stars shall burn there,
 Red as stars may be.
Guileless children, for us plead,
Us for whom the Lamb must bleed.

Little lambs, all in a row,
 Lay your faces down
Till the Lady Mary stoop
 And touch you with her gown.
Little children, laugh and nod,
Gamboling round the Lamb of God.

AFTER CHRISTMAS

SNOWED over with the moonlight,
Or turning back the noon-light,
Down through the grooves of space
Earth swung its old, slow way.
But, thronging the rim of heaven,
Angels from morn till even,
Watched earth with reverent pace
Silent its orbit trace,
Cradle wherein God lay.

HIS FEET

THE Babe is sleeping sweet,
The Mother bending low
Above the folded feet,—
The roads that they shall go!

By lake and little town,
By heading fields of corn,
The city, up and down,
Noon and night and morn.

Dusk and dark and day,
In ministering free,
They walk the broad highway,
They tread the very sea.

Unfettered, tireless till —
With all their labor red —
They climb a weary hill,
Their work consummated.

HIS FEET

Consummated? Not so,
Those shamed and shining feet
The Way forever show,
And make the going sweet.

THE SON OF MAN

He lit the lily's lamp of snow
And fired the rose's sunset heart,
He timed the light's long ebb and flow
And drove the coursing winds apart.

He gathered armfuls of the dew
And shook it over earth again,
He spread the heaven's cloth of blue
And topped the fields with plenteous grain.

He tuned the stars to minstrelsy
As twilight soft, as bird song wild,
Who learned beside His Mother's knee
His prayers like any other child.

THE POOR MAN OF GALILEE

Is He alone at birth
Due garb denied,
When all the looms of earth
His power hath plied?

Must He go houseless, too?
Birds are more blest;
'Neath all the nightly dew
For Him no nest?

Beg of the wayside corn
His daily bread,
The running stream not scorn
With stooping head?

Till at the last His tree
Should yield Him all,
Bed, drink, and garment free,
The Blood, the gall.

THE POOR MAN OF GALILEE

For us as if to save
 He is denied,—
Unto the last He gave,
 Lo, hands and side.

THE VIRGIN PERFECT

THE lowly things were sweet to her,
The clover and the dew;
Creation all seemed meet to her,
Both violet and rue.

A simple, busy day was hers
Within her garden dell;
The common, even way was hers,
But walked uncommon well.

Not that she heard, but kept the word,
In this her virtue lay;
She slept at night when slept the Word,
To slumber was to pray.

TO ST. JOSEPH

ST. JOSEPH, when the day was done
And all your work put by,
You saw the stars come one by one
Out in the violet sky.

You did not know the stars by name,
But there sat by your knee
One who had made the light and flame
And all things bright that be.

You heard with Him birds in the tree
Twitter "Good-night" o'erhead,—
The Maker of the world must see
His little ones to bed.

Then when the darkness settled round;
To Him your prayers were said;
No wonder that your sleep was ground
The angels loved to tread.

ON A PICTURE OF THE HOLY FAMILY

ONE, His very Mother, she
Holds the Child upon her knee,—
Him, the Second of the Three.

Unbegot ere time began,
Truly God and truly Man,
Infinite in finite span.

One, with lilies in his hand,
By the two is seen to stand,—
Was there ever aught so grand!

Thus, when Joseph's work was done,
Sat the Mother and the Son,—
Unity and three in one.

Joseph's house is surely blest,
Harboring such wondrous Guest,—
Oh, but what of Mary's breast!

PICTURE OF THE HOLY FAMILY

What of her whose heart supplied
To His veins their crimson tide,—
Word made Flesh within her side!

Draw the veil of heaven and see
Where in heaven's height is she,—
Nearest to the Trinity.

And beside her very nigh,
On the other side of sky,
Joseph sure is standing by.

Christ, as though the Trinity
Were not home enough for Thee,
Ye are still a family.

THE BAPTIST

LEAPING for joy ere birth,
Shalt have scant joy of earth;
A dying life soon dies,
Thy head a strumpet's prize.
And yet above thy bier
An epitaph dost hear
That makes thy dead heart leap
With joy, all its long sleep.
What was the Poet's word
Thy lonely spirit stirred? —
Hush, hymns of night and morn: —
“Holiest of woman born.”

GETHSEMANE

HE entereth the Garden, lonely,—
Follow Him, O my soul!
He falleth, and lieth pronely, —
Down on thy face, my soul!
Angels are all anear Him,
Yet is He lone, my soul;
Demons no longer fear Him,—
Lo, how the red streams roll!
Only thy love can cheer Him:
Tell Him I love Him, my soul.

Into the deep hell with Him,
Follow Him, O my soul!
Horrors no words tell, with Him
Drink of them deep, my soul.
Challenge the worlds for sorrow,
Shoulder the weight, my soul;
Woes of the ages borrow,
Take of all suffering toll:
Think not of rest to-morrow;
Bleed with Him, O my soul!

THE MOTHERS

THREE mothers met that woeful day;
One as her dead Son pale, one gray
With grieving, and one red with shame:
All called upon one blessed Name.

One from the sorrow of the Cross,
One by the woe of kindred loss,
And one cried out in agony
From shadow of a blacker tree.

One gave the Nazarean birth,
One brought the pardoned thief to earth,
While of that hopeless one begot
Was Judas the Iscariot.

AMONG HIS OWN

(In a Children's Chapel.)

HE lives among His own, the children's God:
Above and by and round Him hourly pass
Their hurrying feet; down hall or stairs, a
pause,

And in the hush outside a knee is bent
In silent adoration of the Guest.

The Guest? Ah, no! The very Host is He,
And they the dwellers in His mansioned Heart.
For them the day is full of work and play,
Of ringing sounds, of mirth and little griefs
That brim a little soul; and they forget
The awful Presence, as the child forgets
His mother, when the day is very full,—
Forgets her in the mind, not in the will.
For though they come and go, and laugh and
shout,

At nightfall, when the spirit's eyes are wide,
And conscience looks across the vanished hours,
They find, what all the day contented Him,

AMONG HIS OWN

They have not left the path He'd have them
tread ;

His arms were 'neath them, and His voice was
heard

In all the secret councils of their deeds.

And when they fall asleep they hold His hand.

PARTUS VIRGINIS

HIM whom, as mothers use,
I bosomed full tide,
I bore, King of the Jews,
And God, beside.

They speak of star and kings,
Wondrous in Bethlehem,
And angels with great wings,—
Enough, of them.

What should my thoughts do
Since the March weather,
And first God and I drew
Breath together?

What should I think upon,
Day or night tide,
Since Elizabeth's son
Knew, in her side,—

PARTUS VIRGINIS

But the coming of Another,
On His shoeless feet,
I, the budding earth, His Mother,
And my breast spring-sweet?

Was it night or day breaking?
Little I could spin,
Who knew my veins making
Robe He should die in.

Nazareth, or David's town,
It was equal to me;
Straw, or eiderdown,
Shepherds, royalty.

There were only He and I,
Within, without me,
All the still sky
Folded about me.

He came: we two apart;
And I thought Him dead
Till He wailed, when my heart
Broke, and joy bled.

QUATRAINS

MARTHA AND MARY

WHEN Light is dead, the busied Day
Folds weary hands and glides away ;
While Night outspreads her starry hair
Upon His grave, and worships there.

IN WINTER

LIKE ghosts of birds, the flocking flakes
Amid the leafless branches fly,—
But ah, the songs, what power remakes
Of silence vanished minstrelsy?

ELEVATION

THRONED in His Mother's arms,
Christ rests in slumber sweet;
Except at God's right hand,
For Him no higher seat.

THE SHAMROCK

SPRUNG from a vanished hour
Of sun and shower,
 You bore a people's faith,
A fadeless flower.

RECEPTION

A MAGDALEN, the scarlet Day,
Knocked at Eve's convent bars;
Comes Twilight, penitent in gray,
Telling her beads, the stars.

THE SON OF GOD

THE fount of Mary's joy
Revealed now lies,
For, lo, has not the Boy
His Father's eyes?

THE SPENDTHRIFT

WITH grasping hand and heart of strife
He seeks the fame that briefly lingers,
And all the while the gold prize, life,
Is slipping through his heedless fingers.

TWO CHILDREN

NAMES do but mock you while they greet;
Sweetness and light you are —
The light beyond all saying sweet,
The sweetness like a star.

STARS

THE foolish virgins ye, your lamps
Through all the waiting night ye trim,
But when the bridegroom Morn is nigh
Ye wither at the kiss of him.

LIFE

ONLY one springtime for the sowing,
And one brief summer for the growing;
Only one autumn for the reaping
Of harvest for the winter's keeping.

REQUEST

LAY lilies on dead innocence,
 Strew roses on the bier of love,
But let my grave of penitence
 Be sweet with violets above.

“ SCOURGED AND CROWNED ”

A REGAL sequence see:

Him whom His subjects loathed,—
Before He crowned should be —
They first with Purple clothed.

RAIMENT

THE seamless cloak He wore
They kept, nor broke a thread:
His garb of flesh they tore
As if from shred to shred.

AT EMMAUS

THEY knew Him when He broke the bread:
Was't by the accompanying word He said
Which faith, though faltering, understands,
Or wounded beauty of His hands?

THE NATIVITY

A MIRACLE PLAY

PERSONS

THE HOLY FAMILY

MATTHIAS

REBECCA

THEIR INFANT SON

SHEPHERDS

ANGELS

SCENE I

Bethlehem, the night of Christ's birth. Early evening, near the house of Matthias. Enter Joseph, leading an ass upon which the Virgin Mary is seated.

JOSEPH.

A wind hath blown the heavens into flame
About us; earth is silver to our feet.
By night, by day, God's hand hath guided us,
Pillar and cloud His firmament hath been
To bring us hither; this should be the town
Of David, city of our sire.

THE NATIVITY

MARY.

Even so.

JOSEPH.

Here where the unknowing workman left an
arch

In the broad wall we pass; thus Israel's God
Comes stooping to His own.

MARY.

Whereto He leads

We can but follow now as ever, yet
Methinks I hear, over the din of song
That beat about our temples all the way,
The night-song of a mother for her babe.
Hark!

(Crooning on the wind.)

Baby, sleep, my child;
Deep the night hangs o'er thee.
High the wind and wild;
Dreaming is before thee.
Come, come the happy slumber;
Bright dreams be thine in number.
Ah, baby, on thy mother's breast
Is sleep for thee, for thee is rest.

THE NATIVITY

JOSEPH.

Let us approach ; the inn mayhap is far
And crowded by the mandates of our king.

(He knocks at the door of the house.)

MATTHIAS.

(Within.) Who is it starts the peacefulness
of night
With clamorous knocking?

JOSEPH.

Two of David's house
Come far, and weary ; may we lodge to-night
Beside thy hearth ?

MATTHIAS.

Mine house is all too strait
For mine own household. *(Opens the door.)*
Beggars and their beast,
Begone.

REBECCA.

Hush ; houseless, in the night, with child.
Surely some room can still be made ——

THE NATIVITY

MATTHIAS.

We are too poor. (*To Joseph.*) But no,
farther down The inn is
The road. (*Looks at Mary.*) And yet —
and yet —
Good night.

(*Mary and Joseph turn sorrowfully away.*)

MARY.

(*Looks at Rebecca.*) Good night.

REBECCA.

Houseless, with child — O husband, call them
back.

MATTHIAS.

Peace, they will elsewhere shelter find and rest.

REBECCA.

(*Musing.*) Her eyes were like the pools of
Hesebon
That mirrored her sad soul.

(*Their infant begins to weep.*)

THE NATIVITY

MATTHIAS.

Lo, here thy child
Hath need of thee, and of thine every thought.

REBECCA.

He sickens, yea, his eyes begin to blur.

MATTHIAS.

His temples burn ; it is some malady
Of sudden, unknown power.

REBECCA.

Give me the child ;
Fetch thee yon herbs medicinal and oil.

MATTHIAS.

His eyes are fixèd ; how his bosom lifts !

REBECCA.

O God of Jacob, leave us still our son.
(*The infant dies. There is much lamenting.*)

THE NATIVITY

SCENE II

*The stable. Midnight. Mary and Joseph,
with shepherds and angels, adoring at the
crib.*

(Chorus of angels.)

From heaven He came,
The Eternal Flame,
To fire men's hearts
With Love's own darts,
To conquer sin
And mercy win
Of God above.

Lo, in the straw —
Near may ye draw,
For God is weak
That ye may speak,—
The God of peace;
Let earth's war cease —
Toward men good will.

THE NATIVITY

REBECCA.

(*Without.*) God knows, God knows, my
heart is bleeding sore;
My son had hardly come to months that knew
His mother's lips, his mother's face and voice;
Warm with my kisses slept he, in an hour
Cold in mine arms.

But she, that pilgrim spouse,
With all the lights of mother in her eyes,
In dewy deeps the trembling wistfulness
Of hopes unfathomable,—pleading eyes,
Ye draw me from the shrouding of my babe,
For she hath need of me. (*Entering stable.*)

What wondrous light,
What music is there here! The Mother, ah,
Her Babe. O God, stop all the clocks of time
And never ring the passing of this hour!

JOSEPH.

Woman, thou look'st upon the face of God.

REBECCA.

I saw Him in His Mother's waiting eyes,
And I have come from mine own babe's stark
form

THE NATIVITY

With swaddling bands I never may need
again.

MARY.

The heart of Abraham is in thy breast.

*(Giving her the cloths that were around
Jesus.)*

Lay these upon thine infant's quiet side,
Sister, that hast this night befriended God.

SCENE III

The flight. Night. Near the house of Matthias and Rebecca. Enter Joseph, leading an ass upon which is seated Mary with the Child.

JOSEPH.

Ye stars, that run before the winds of heaven,
Hide in the frowning cliffs of mountainous
cloud;

Thou, planet, wimpled as a maid, with light,
Tell not our steps; God's finger points us far;
The way is His who is the Way. *(Lullaby
on the air.)*

THE NATIVITY

MARY.

Soft, listen!

REBECCA.

(Within, singing.)

Baby, sleep, my babe;
God's own night is o'er us.
Jesse's rod hath flowered;
Heaven opes before us.
God sleeps as thou art sleeping,
While angels watch are keeping.
Sleep, sleep, until the songful dawn;
God's day is here, sin's night is gone.

MARY.

Yet, ere another westering sun his way
Hath crimsoned, earth shall lie in their blood
washed,
The sons that sleep this night on mother
breasts.

JOSEPH.

This woman's child hath died that he may live,
Romping forever in the fields of heaven.

*(They pass along. Singly the stars drop out.
The moon meets a cloud. Rebecca's lullaby
dies away in the darkness.)*

ODES

A HOSTING OF THE GAEL

Written for the presentation of the sword of Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher to the University of Notre Dame, which already possessed the flag of the Irish Brigade.

THIS is a marriage feast today,
A wishèd anniversary
Of union and reunion; Emmet, Meagher, all
True sons of Irish blood for honor dead,
With lifted head,
Hearken to this most jocund muster call;
Their ships are on the sea,—
From ancient Donegal
They come, from Kerry,
Ah, and from Tipperary,
Yea, rather, say
From Dublin to Cathay,
From Belgian battlefields, from Spain,
From snowed Saskatchewan, from Afric sand,
From Flodden Field, and Fontenoy,
From every field and every land,
Come man and boy

A HOSTING OF THE GAEL

To keep with us this day a sacred trust,
For the earth is starred with work of Irish
brain

And rich with Irish dust.

Behold, of heroes hosting here today,

In the farthest fore

Stand men whose eyes

Are blue and gray

Like Irish skies

And like the coats they wore.

No party festival of North or South

By us is kept,

And on our mouth

No vaunting of a single patriot name

To envied fame;

But in one man stands glorified the race.

Their brow we grace

With crown of laurel and with olive leaf,

And in proud grief

That has no tongue and keeps its tears unwept,

We greet the splendid host of Irish dead,

Leaving their age-old shroud,

Gaunt witnesses, a cloud,

By every wind increased,

Ghostly battalions led by greater ghosts

A HOSTING OF THE GAEL

That round us troop, with measured, noiseless
tread —

O God of Hosts,

We bid them welcome to our marriage feast.

Should any answer come

Whence stand they ranked and dumb?

A sudden thunder of a shout

Their throats give out

As if these long dead bones

Yet kept remembrance of old trumpet tones;

The dense, straight ranks are stirred

And rises one great word —

“Fredericksburg” is heard,

While comes this chorus forth:

“We are the men that followed, followed after

The sun-bright sword and the sea-bright
flag,

With a faith in our hearts that rose like
laughter

Most in the straits where the craven lag;

We are the men no danger daunted,

Following Freedom like a star,

Hot after glory, honor-haunted,

A HOSTING OF THE GAEL

With our flag of green and our sworded
Meagher.

“ We are the men and these our brothers
Who held the heights and threw us back ;
Over them, too, these thousand others,
A green flag waved through the war cloud
black.

And Fredericksburg is an open story,
It was Irish blood both sides outpoured,
For they, too, followed honor and glory,
A green flag theirs, but not our sword.

“ And we are come from the peace of slumber,
Nor North, nor South, by division sharp,
But Irish all, of that world-wide number
In all times mighty with sword and harp ;
To lift once more, from the dust, our voices,
In one last cheer that may echo far —
Fredericksburg in the grave rejoices,
Now the Flag of Green weds the Sword of
Meagher.”

So sang they, pale dead men,
Risen from their cold dream
To follow still the Gleam ;

A HOSTING OF THE GAEL

And in their hollowed eyes
Were what with mortals pass for tears
As after many years
They saw again the frayed and faded fold
That was their Cloth of the Field of
Gold;

And a flash as of a star
When they saw the shining length
Of the blade that in his strength
Girt the dauntless Meagher.
Lo! flag and sword together pressed,
By all their eyes caressed.
Then like a breath of prayer
They melted on the air.

Learn we from these our dead
The meaning of this day,
And be not lightly led
From our fathers' way.
Not what our hands may hold —
Few threads of green and gold
And storied steel —
Not by these tokens may we feel
Sons of our laurelled sires,
Save that the same pure fires
Burn all our souls within,

A HOSTING OF THE GAEL

And heart to heart, the quick heart to the dead,
 be kin.

Keep we the Faith sword-bright

By day, by night,

Our fathers' meed shall never suffer loss

 But know increase.

The sword itself is likened to the cross

 That is our peace.

ODE: FOR INDIANA DAY, PANAMA-
PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL
EXPOSITION

PRELUDE — TO CALIFORNIA

WHO saw thy sunrise, Woman of the West?

For, Empress of the lands of dying day,
With all time's sunsets buried in thy breast,
Thou hadst such dawn as can not pass away:
To sing of that fair hour is there not one,
O Mistress of the mansions of the sun?

Not all unwarranted I come this day
Which sees far-sundered strands
In their united waters joining hands,
And cheek to cheek Atlantic to Pacific lay.
I of a State that has for tide

The coming and the going of the corn,
Some borrowings of pride

Bring to this jocund morn.
When down thy washen flanks the daylight
broke

Through ancient night, a newer life and
law,
Barefooted men in brown —
And earlier the blackgown —

PRELUDE—TO CALIFORNIA

The promise of a day that would not set
For thee bespoke,
And their life saw —

A glory that the world can not forget —
The flowering and the fruitage of a toil
Whose harvest was of hearts not less than
wine and oil.

O Feet, that tread the purple grapes of day
Until that wine

Thy seas a thousand leagues incarnadine;
Thou that hast kept, how many ages old,
The tollgates of the sun, and toll and gate are
gold;

Arms that thou holdest, prophet-like, on high
Till in thy daily sky

A victory for the sun is writ in conquest
flame,—

Seek not my passing name
But know

That even as those sons of long ago,
Thine earliest-born, the vanward of thy sires,
Who found and kept thy wilderness a rose,
Far-blushing to Sierra's silvering snows,—
That so am I,

Moulded and quickened by the selfsame fires,
Minstrel and pilgrim of the sky,

PRELUDE—TO CALIFORNIA

Whose singing were the night winds in the
grass
Which no one heeds,
Except it were of more than mortal deeds,
And memories that shall not pass,
And men that can not die.

ODE: PANAMA, THE MASTERY OF MAN

Text of the rolling years that who shall scan!
Handwriting of a day that knew no sun,
Rich palimpsest, through whose full lines
appear

The records of an earlier day fordone:
Writing in stone, a future deed God
wrought

And folded it away until the year
When, counting all our yesterdays as
naught,

His creature, Man, partaking of His
power,

Should read that purpose, and set free
the hour

Which marks completion of His ancient plan.

For there has been a Workman great and
good:

Fathom on fathom laid He in the slime
The unbreached links that chain the
world in one.

ODE: PANAMA, MASTERY OF MAN

He made, and swung the pendulum of time,
White magic at His word grew gathered
light;

What golden jungle could have laired the
sun?

He saw the Day upon the brow of Night
Lay the first kiss that trembled into
stars: —

Here opening pleasancess, there set-
ting bars,

The Worker in His power's plenitude.

What lesser Being could have sired the sea
Whose waters prove him nursling of the sky,
Finding his cradle in the various earth,
The ocean's hollow or the cowslip's eye,
But ever passing up and down a stair —
Procession of continual rebirth —

The silken ladder of the sunbeams' hair:
Behold the sea, how hath the mother-
ing moon
Some lullaby for him that she doth
croon

While slumbering his breast heaves peacefully.

ODE: PANAMA, MASTERY OF MAN

Who zoned the worlds with greater worlds of
air,
A trackless footing where the lightnings run,
The day's broad rampart and its rendez-
vous
Since chaos first was raided by the sun,—
Titanic battles that have left no scar
On all the frontier of its quiet blue
Where soar our wingèd ships: the sentry
star
That sees them sudden rise, then dis-
appear,
To all their challenging but answers,
" Here
Is empery that God may not forswear."

Not from the star-veined heavens comes our
gold,
Nor in the flashing skies is struck our fire,
Doth any field of sunset give us bread?
Swollen with pride and loud with vain
desire,
Of old men were who vowed assault on
heaven,
Threatening with trowelled hand the day-
spring's head:

ODE: PANAMA, MASTERY OF MAN

And Babel's very tongue is perished even,
The sun shines down a mockery of
their pain

And there is laughter of them in the
rain,—

The earth is our inheritance, behold!

The earth that is the sister of the sea,

The earth that is the daughter of the stars,

The mother of the myriad race of men:

Gaze with Columbus over ocean bars,

Drink with Balboa in thy thirsting eye

The waters that he quaffed on Darien,

With them turn homeward, loaded with
new sky:

Catch, if thou mayest, the lightning
of the gleam

That crowns their brow of continents
a-dream,

And thou hast neighbored immortality.

Thy conquest is the taking of the world,

The world that is and can not be but good

Since God first looked upon His labors
done.

ODE: PANAMA, MASTERY OF MAN

Canst thou forget Whose awful Feet have
stood

Even as Man upon the strand of time?

The Orient He, but till the West is won,

The furthest footing of the utmost clime,

His message has a meaning and His
law

Compulsion of obedience and awe

In Whom the racial destiny is furled.

Westward and farther west till west is east,

The oar, the spur, the spade, the axe, the
cross,

Humanity and Christ move onward one.

And be it counted to mankind for loss

If on this day no word be said or sung

For him who took the highways of the sun,

A pilgrim scrip about his shoulders flung,

Glad robber of the roads that lead
to death,

Who stole men's souls, unto his lat-
est breath,

Conquistador for God, the mission priest.

Ye men for whom our bannered song is flung,

Whose muscles have a magic that the sea

ODE: PANAMA, MASTERY OF MAN

And earth obey, yours is the conqueror's
mind.

Ye are the sons of olden chivalry,

Yea, ye are sons of that high lineage

Whose records written in the rock ye find ;

Ye are the sons of Him, the Primal Mage,

Whose might in yours has wrought
till Panama

Outrolls the latest workings of the
Law

Whose earliest deeds the stars of morning sung.

Then let the morning and the night as one,

Let East and West and all the lands be-
tween,

North worlds and south together find a
voice

Acclaiming what this day our eyes have seen.

Until the heavens are folded like a tent

Will all the thoughts of coming time rejoice

Our swords were into yeoman plowshares
bent,

And while this year on half the na-
tions fell

The lightnings and the cursing rains
of hell,

The last great wonder of the world was done.

POSTLUDE: (TO INDIANA'S POET,
JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.)

Lo, o'er the fields at home now sinks the sun,
And with the crickets' hum
The tinkling bells of cattle homeward come
Familiar tell
The dim, tired land another day is done.
And my song pauses for a last fare-
well
To you, and greeting unto one
Whose ears
Have caught, how many happy years,
The murmurs of the music of our speech,
Whose tongue
Our simple days with kindred art has sung,
And kept a silence where no word could reach.
Him by whose Brandywine
First strayed in childhood days these feet of
mine,
Brother and friend,
I hail him as our State's sufficient pride
And give him part —

POSTLUDE

Whose words, deep-springing from a people's
heart,
Home-gathered there abide —
In glories of a day that has its end,
As has at length the lingering song of one
Who brought his dreams to thee, O City of the
Sun!

THE END

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